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GRIZZLIES TACKLE PUGET SOUND
IN FIRST ROUND OF DAFFODIL CLASSIC

fultz/eh
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sports state + basketball + cs

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MISSOULA.....

The University of Montana Grizzlies will tangle with the University of Puget Sound in the first round of the Daffodil Classic Friday night in Tacoma, Wash. Montana and the tourney host Loggers will square off following the Long Beach State-Portland State game.

Last year Montana won two narrow decisions from the Loggers, nipping them 68-61 in Missoula and 69-66 in Tacoma. This year the Loggers are vastly improved and UM coach Jud Heathcote considers his team the underdogs in Friday's contest.

"They are improved, it is their home court and we must be considered the underdogs," Heathcote said.

"But we are hoping to knock them off, so that we can play a nationally ranked team," Heathcote added.

The nationally ranked team that Heathcote is referring to is the powerful 49ers of Long Beach State. The 49ers are ranked in the nation's top ten by all the polls and boast a consensus All-American and first-round ABA draft choice in 6-6 Ed Ratleff. Ratleff plays guard for Long Beach team and decided to forego the professional offer by Indiana's Pacers to complete his final season of college basketball.

Ratleff averaged 21.4 points and 7.5 rebounds each game last year. He receives ample support in the Long Beach lineup ^{from} w/ 6-8, 240 pound Leonard Gray and 6-11 Nate Stephens.

The 49ers convincingly beat North Texas State, 90-63, in their only outing this season. In that game they hit 55 per cent of their efforts from the field.

Long Beach's Friday night opponent, Portland State, is the only team in the tournament that will not be entering Friday nights's play with an unblemished record. The Vikings are 1-2 for the young season.

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Montana enters the game with Puget Sound with a 2-0 record and the Loggers counter the perfect Ullmark with a spotless 3-0 record of their own. The Loggers have beaten the University of Alaska by 80-56 and 77-70 counts and Lewis and Clark College by an 82-58 score.

According to assistant coach Jim Brandenburg the Loggers are a fast break team that hits the offensive and defensive boards hard. "UPS has a young team, they start only two seniors, that is improving rapidly," Brandenburg said.

The Logger lineup will be 6-9 Steve Philpot at center, 6-6 Sam May and 6-4 Ron Oughton at the forward slots and 6-5 Ron Lund and 6-0 Fred Gaines at the guard positions. 6-11 sophomore Curt Peterson will see plenty of action behind Philpot.

Montana will use the same lineup that it started in the victories over Morningside and Stout State. Ken McKenzie will start at center, Earl Tye and Larry Smedley will be the forwards and Mike Murray and Dale Parker will man the guard positions.

Montana erased a 26-21 halftime deficit in the Stout State game and Heathcote said that he felt that this would help his ball club.

"I was pleased that we could win by coming from behind. A come-from-behind win is good for the team. It helps the kids confidence and is good for team morale. We will know that we can come back when we get behind in future games," Heathcote said.

Heathcote also said that promising sophomore forward Tim Stambaugh has decided to drop out of school at the end of the quarter. In order to keep the 6-7 youngster from losing a year of eligibility, Heathcote will not play him in any games.

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